



Todd K. Apo
Councilmember



CITY COUNCIL

DISTRICT 1

Ewa-Ewa Beach-Honouliuli-West Loch
Kapolei-Kalaheo-Honokai Hale / Nanakai Gardens-Ko Olina
Nanakuli-Wai'anae-Makaha-Keaau-Makua

MONTHLY REPORT

March 2005

YOUR DISTRICT 1 STAFF AT YOUR SERVICE

Todd K. Apo, Councilmember

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Councilmember's Message

ALOHA!

Cooperation is the word of the month. With everyone getting up to speed, we are developing our relationships with Mayor Hannemann and his departments. We have found the administration responsive and helpful with the concerns and issues raised by everyone. From day to day issues, to big picture planning for the future, we are looking forward to working together to attain results.

MAYOR'S CABINET - March will be filled with the confirmation of Mayor Hannemann's Department Directors. I have been able to sit down one on one with all of the appointees, and believe that Mayor Hannemann has selected a great group to "operate" our City & County. As you know, the Royal Hawaiian Band appointment has caused much debate. I thank everyone who has taken the time to share their viewpoint, both through emails and by testifying at the hearings.

BULKY ITEM PICKUP – Starting March 1, the Leeward Coast can celebrate the start of regular bulky item pickup. We hope everyone takes advantage of this City service, as we believe this is one step towards solving our illegal dumping problems. The announced plans are for this service to begin moving east through Kapolei and Ewa in the near future. If you have questions about this service, contact the Bulky Item P-Up at 455-1725 (Ewa / Kapolei), 696-3421 (Waianae) or check out www.opala.org.

MY STAFF – I want to take this opportunity to thank my staff for not only keeping me up to date on all of the issues, but more importantly, for being the face of your representation here at the City Council. We receive numerous requests and inquiries and our team continues to work hard to address these matters as quickly as possible. I hope that everyone who has contacted our office has found things to be courteous and responsive. From road and traffic issues, to safety issues, to input on proposed legislation – we stand ready to hear and help. Please feel free to provide any input or comments to me directly at any time.

Eyes on Ewa *by Wendy Sefo*

Road resurfacing and pothole repair continue to be a challenge island wide.

Councilmember Apo is aware of the condition of the roads throughout the district - most notably Geiger Road from Fort Weaver to Roosevelt, Renton Road from Fort Weaver to the train station and the entire length of Papipi Road just to name a few.

Councilmember Apo is actively working with Mayor Hannemann and his Departments of Design and Construction and Facilities Maintenance to prioritize and schedule the badly needed resurfacing and repair work for Ewa / Ewa Beach.

Please contact the City's Pothole hotline at 527-6006. When you encounter any potholes that have not been attended too with in a reasonable amount of time, contact Wendy at 692-5509.

Keeping Up In Kapolei *by Wendy Sefo*

As reported recently in the West Oahu Current, Councilmember Apo and others have been diligently working to arrange for the public's access to the additional parking for Kapolei Regional Park.

The lot is located just off of Fort Barrette next to the Archery Range. Currently, there are a series of gates that when open, allow access to both the parking lot and the Archery Range.

The Department of Parks is in the process of establishing a protocol to allow different community designees authorization to open and close the gates daily.

Access to this additional parking lot will provide much needed relief to the many families who attend weekend events in the park.

Watching Out for Waianae *by Karen Awana*

On Friday, February 4, students were given oral hygiene instructions and dental examinations at two schools along the Waianae Coast. Students at Ka Waihona O Ka Na'auao and Kamaile Elementary were pleased to receive goodie bags that included a Crest Spin Toothbrush, toothpaste and dental floss. Mahalo to the Hawaii Dental Association, school administration and teachers for their kokua and role at making this project a success.

Councilmember Apo met with Nettie Waiamau-Nunuha and other members of the CAR (Community Area of Responsibility) Project on Thursday, February 24. City and County Community Based Development Division Chief, Randall Wong was also present. CAR has been diligent at working on solutions to address the homeless situation on the coast. Councilmember shared his ideas for possible solutions, which would involve collaboration with private and public entities at the Uluwehi site.

The Analyst's Report: Real Property Taxes

By Charmaine Doran

In 2002, the median price for a home on Oahu was \$350,000.00. Today, it is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$500,000.00. This rampant boost in property values is a trend occurring statewide with somewhat bittersweet results. On the one hand, the trend symbolizes a robust economy and an increase in tax revenues for government. On the other hand, it means a larger tax bill for many homeowners and a harsh reality for those who live on fixed incomes. Recently, the City Council began looking at possible alternatives to ease this tax burden on Oahu homeowners.

On February 17, 2005, the City Council's Budget Committee convened a Real Property Tax Informational Workshop. The aim of the workshop was to review seven different legislative proposals that offer amendments to the City's tax code. Several of the measures suggest increasing tax credits or exemption benefits for Oahu homeowners. At the workshop, the Budget & Fiscal Services Department reported that the City could expect both revenue losses and operational costs with almost every proposal. Implementing the increased tax credit would cost the City between 20 and 40 million dollars in lost tax revenues annually.

Councilmember Apo considers these initial bills a step in the right direction, but believes that a more creative and innovative approach is necessary to seriously address the issue. He prefers to pursue legislation that provides both circuit breaker credits and home exemptions within the tax code. He has charged his staff with identifying alternatives and formulating a tax reform proposal along this line.

With almost 40% of the City's budget coming from real property taxes, large losses in revenue will hinder essential public services and improvement projects. For that reason, balancing vital revenue with tax relief will require resourceful policy-making and a delicate touch by the Council.

The City Council will again review Real Property Tax rates during the upcoming budget session that is set to begin later this month.

Coming Soon

For those ages 50+

Prime Time Wellness Fair

Wednesday, 23 March 2005

8:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Neal Blaisdell Exhibition Hall

Sponsored in part by the Department of Parks and Recreation.